

July 11, 2003

Ms. Teri Murrison
East Merced Resource Conservation District
2135 Wardrobe Avenue, Suite C
Merced, California 95340

Ms. Nancy McConnell and Ms. Holly Warner
Mariposa County Resource Conservation District
Post Office Box 746
Mariposa, California 95338

Dear Ms. Murrison, Ms. McConnell, and Ms. Warner:

I am writing regarding the Baseline Biological Monitoring on the Merced River project concept proposal recently submitted to the State Water Resource Control Board by the East Merced and Mariposa Resource Conservation District.

The San Joaquin River Management Program, established by State Legislation AB 3603 in September 1990, provides a public forum to identify problems and solutions for wildlife, flood protection, water quality, water supply, fisheries, and recreation issues. In February 1995, SJRMP submitted to the legislature a river management plan that recommended or supported various projects or programs to address these issues.

The SJRMP Advisory Council was presented with a summary of EMRCD's and MRCD's concept proposal at its June 25th meeting in Modesto, and had an opportunity to ask clarifying questions. The written concept proposal has also been posted on the SJRMP website. It is our understanding that the project is proposing to create an aquatic resource database that would promote the dissemination and generation of new and accurate scientific data, and gather baseline data on fish, riparian bird, and aquatic macroinvertebrate species composition, distribution, and abundance in the upper Merced River watershed and lower Merced River corridor. These activities are similar to projects or programs recommended in the 1995 plan and can advance water quality, wildlife, fisheries, and recreation improvements on the San Joaquin River.

Based on the June 25, 2003 presentation, the SJRMP Advisory Council has agreed that the proposed project is consistent with SJRMP's goals and adheres to the SJRMP principle that impacts resulting from the action are acceptable to other interests.

If you have any questions, please contact Paula J. Landis at (559) 230-3310.

Sincerely,

Timothy Ramirez, Chair
San Joaquin River
Management Program
Advisory Council